

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Certech Inc

New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program

Certech Grows Sales, Cuts Costs with NJMEP's Lean Training

Client Profile:

Certech, Inc., manufactures injection-molded ceramic parts used in the investment casting of turbine engines. Certech is based in Wood Ridge, New Jersey, and has additional manufacturing plants in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Mexico and the UK. The company was founded in 1978 and was purchased by Carpenter Technologies Corporation in 1997. Today, Certech's New Jersey operation employs 300 people.

Situation:

The New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, followed up on a telemarketing lead to learn that Certech wanted to build on basic Lean Manufacturing training that had been provided by its parent company.

Solution:

The NJMEP field agent began by securing Richard Reale of Positive Impact Inc. as a third party resource. The field agent also assisted Certech in obtaining financial assistance through the Department of Labor, organized the project, and chose the appropriate Lean Kaizen events, identified the resources necessary to implement them and oversaw the events' implementation. After conducting a Lean Opportunity Assessment and identifying areas needing improvement by applying Lean Methodology, NJMEP created a Value Stream Map and conducted Lean Kaizen events to reduce or eliminate waste in Certech's operations. The entire Certech staff received training (in English and Spanish, as necessary) in Principles of Lean Manufacturing and 5S. An important goal of the project was to create a Lean culture at the company. The Kaizen events, which included Cellular Manufacturing, Kanban and 5S, were conducted on the shop floor and involved many key employees.

Results:

- * Improved product flow and reduced costs throughout the plant.
- * Improved efficiency, reduced waste, and decreased cycle time of products to the customer.
- * Increased sales by 7 percent.
- * Anticipated annual cost savings of more than \$250,000.
- * Reduced lead time by 8 percent.
- * Retained 40 jobs.
- * Continued Lean collaboration with NJMEP to implement 5S throughout the plant and undertake further cost reduction projects.

Testimonial:

"The project has been a success because we involved all of our people in the training. Once trained in the Lean Methodology, the solutions for improvement came from our employees. They have a vested

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interest in the success of the program and their ideas for improvement. NJMEP has provided us with assistance which has allowed our organization to make continuous improvements towards efficiency and waste reduction to remain competitive in a changing marketplace which we otherwise would not have been able to do."

Andrew Belling, Site Manager